

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1638

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 7746

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PE

SUBJECT: MINE STRIKE

REF: LIMA 7677

1. SUMMARY: GOP SUSPENDS RIGHTS AND DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY IN MINING AREAS. MINERS FEDERATION REVISES ITS DEMANDS, PERHAPS INCREASING CHANCES FOR AN END TO THE STRIKE. END SUMMARY.
2. THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT HAS DECLARED A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN THE 5 IMPORTANT MINING DEPARTMENTS (STATES) OF THE CENTRAL REGION, SUSPENDING RIGHTS TO HABEAS CORPUS, PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, FREEDOM FROM HOUSE SEARCHES WITHOUT A WARRANT, MOVEMENT, AND FREEDOM FROM FORCED EXILE.
3. THE MINERS HAVE BEEN GIVEN UNTIL SEPT 1 TO RETURN TO WORK, AND MINING COMPANIES MAY FIRE RECALCITRANT WORKERS AND HIRE REPLACEMENTS BEGINNING SEPT 5. TROOPS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO A NUMBER OF MINING AND RELATED FACILITIES AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES TO PROTECT RETURNING WORKERS FROM REPRISALS.
4. TOQUEPALA AND PLANTS AT ILO REMAIN PARALYZED. CUAJONE CONTINUES TO OPERATE, AND WORKERS CONTINUE TO TRICKLE BACK TO SOME OF THE

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MINES AND PLANTS IN THE CENTRAL REGION.

5. SOURCES AT THE PERUVIAN CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS (CTP) WHO HAVE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE MINISTER OF LABOR ON THIS ISSUE, SAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION OF VIOLATING THE PARLIAMENTARY

IMMUNITY OF THE LEFTIST CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DELEGATES (UDP, FOCEP

AND PSR-ARAGON FACTION) WHO HAVE BEEN PROLONGING THE STRIKE THROUGH THEIR AGITATION...THE GOVERNMENT WILL SIMPLY TRY TO DEPRIVE THEM OF AND AUDIENCE. HOWEVER, THESE SOURCES SAY, IF WORKER ATTENDANCE IS NOT NEAR NORMAL AT THE MAJOR INSTALLATIONS BY SEPT 3, THE GOVERNMENT WILL PROBABLY BEGIN TO USE FORCE AGAINST STRIKE LEADERS WHO ARE NOT ASSEMBLY DELEGATES.

6. WE HAVE RECEIVED AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT AN ASSEMBLY OF MINE AND METALLURGICAL WORKERS' DELEGATES VOTED ON THE EVENING OF AUG 30 TO DROP, OR AT LEAST DECREASE THE PRIORITY OF THE ONE DEMAND WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS FIRMLY REJECTED, I.E., REHIRING OF FIRED WORKERS, THEREBY PERHAPS ENHANCING THE LIKELIHOOD OF A SETTLEMENT. ACCORDING TO THE SAME REPORT, THE MINE LEADERS HAVE REQUESTED A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ TO DISCUSS THEIR NEW POSITION.

7. THE PRESSURE FOR DECISIVE STEPS IS OBVIOUSLY INCREASING. APART FROM THE MINERS' REJECTION OF MORALES BERMUDEZ OFFER MEETING MOST OF THEIR DEMANDS (REFTEL), RUMORS HAVE BEEN SPREADING THAT ADDITIONAL STRIKES OR WORK STOPPAGES ARE IN THE OFFING. WITHIN THE LAST WEEK A GROUP OF PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES GROUPS' LEADERS HAVE ORGANIZED AN INTERSECTORAL COMMITTEE OF STATE EMPLOYEES (CITE) TO FIGHT PUBLIC SECTOR LAYOFFS. THEY ARE TRYING

TO ORGANIZE A DEMONSTRATION OF ALL PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES OF LIMA AT A MAIN SQUARE ON THE EVENING OF SEPT 1 AND CALLED ON HAYA DE LA CONFIDENTIAL

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TORRE TO ENLIST HIS SUPPORT. WE UNDERSTAND FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY REIGNS AMONG THE RANK AND FILE OF THIS NORMALLY COMPLACENT SECTOR. GOP PRONOUNCEMENT REGARDING HOW MUCH MONEY WILL BE SAVED FOR EVERY LAID-OFF WORKER, AND FAILURE TO CLARIFY WHO WILL BE AFFECTED (BY MINISTRY, JOB CATEGORY, SENIORITY, OR OTHER CRITERIA) DO NOT HELP. SUTEP, THE RADICAL TEACHERS' FEDERATION, HAS BEEN AGITATING FOR A STRIKE NOW, IN SYMPATHY WITH THE MINERS, AND A GENERAL STRIKE IN THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER. NEITHER IDEA HAS YET CAUGHT FIRE. ADDING INSULT TO INJURY, THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT PRINT ITS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS ON THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE, EL PERUANO, OR ITS OTHER DAILY PAPER, LA CRONICA, SINCE BOTH WERE CLOSED AUG 29-30 DUE TO A SITDOWN STRIKE. SHLAUDEMAM

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